



UTAH

THE STORIED DOMAIN

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF UTAH'S EVENTFUL CAREER

Comprising
*The Thrilling Story of Her People from the Indians
of Yesterday to the Industrialists
of Today*

By

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rather flat. The result was that nearly every house leaked during the first winter, and umbrellas, where such a luxury as an umbrella was owned, were frequently in demand to shelter those engaged in cooking, and even in bed persons would be seen sitting or lying under an umbrella. The houses were chiefly covered with poles and soil, or boards and soil. Where the poles or boards were strong enough, the depth of soil was increased to prevent leaking; but as there were comparatively few in this condition, the most of the houses were ornamented with pillars to support the roofs. The clay which was found in the bottoms near the fort made excellent plaster for the inside of the houses, and when mixed with water made a pretty good whitewash that was only inferior to lime. But it would not stand exposure to rain, as some of the people learned who covered their houses with it; it melted quickly and offered no resistance to the rain. The common soil was far superior to it for this purpose, for it would absorb and retain considerable moisture.

The first winter the Saints spent in the valley was a remarkably mild one. There were two or three cold spells of weather, but they did not last long. This was most fortunate for the people, for neither their food nor their clothing was of such a character to enable them to endure very cold weather. Many were without shoes, and the best and only covering they could get for their feet was moccasins. Their clothing, too, was pretty well exhausted, and the goat, deer and elk skins which they could procure were most acceptable for clothing, though far from being pleasant to wear in the rain or snow. The writer recollects how proud he was when he succeeded in obtaining an elk skin, out of which, after smoking it, he had a pair of pantaloons made. He has had the good fortune to wear some of the best fabrics of this and other countries since then; but he never has owned an article of dress which gave him so much satisfaction and for which he was more thankful than those elkskin trowsers.

(Contd. from L. D. S. M. Star of March 10, 1874.)

Early Life in the Valley

Until saw mills could be built to run by water, lumber had to be made with whip saws, and many of the men were engaged in sawing through the entire winter. So anxious were the people to preserve the timber, that strict regulations were adopted respecting the manner of cutting it, and the Municipal Council decided that no person should build with logs without permission. Many supposed that the timber would soon be exhausted, and then the settlement would be in a bad plight. But when President Young returned in 1848, these restrictions were removed, and the people were left at liberty to cut timber as they pleased.

He had a better idea of the extent of the timber in the mountains, and had no fears of its speedy consumption. Many of the first settlers of this valley would have been amazed in 1847 or 1848, had they seen such piles of lumber brought from the mountains as are sold every season now, and have been for years back, in this city. Every year has brought to light new bodies of timber, and many of the people have gone to the opposite extreme, and seem to imagine that the timber resources of these mountains cannot be exhausted, judging by their recklessness in cutting and destroying this important element of wealth.

The public meetings through the winter were held generally near the liberty pole in the centre of the Old Fort. The mildness of the weather enabled the people to meet in the open air without much discomfort. A better and more commodious and warmer shelter was afterwards erected there, in which public meetings were held. Meetings were also held on Sunday and other evenings in various houses in the Forts, and efforts were made to keep up quorum organizations and meetings with excellent results. Notwithstanding the scarcity of food and clothing and the exposure and severe labors of the people there was but little sickness and few deaths. And a feeling of thankfulness was almost universal among the people to the Lord for bringing them out of the midst of their enemies, from mobocracy and violence, to this peaceful and healthy land, where they could dwell together as a band of brethren and sisters.

The farming land was fenced in one field, and the people were counseled to select their land as nearly together as possible. Care was taken to preserve the rights of the people to the water for irrigation purposes; and one of the first grants of a right to erect a saw mill was given to brothers Archibald and Robert Gardner, on Mill Creek, with the provision that water for irrigation purposes should not be interfered with. To many of our readers it may be interesting to know what portion of the Valley was first fenced. On the north the line of fence commenced at a steep point in the bluffs just south of the Warm Springs—a little east and south of the present Bath House—and ran directly from there to the northwest corner of the Fort; it then started from the southeast corner of the Fort and bore east to some distance beyond Mill Creek, and then east to the bluffs at the foot of the mountains. The whole length of the line fenced, besides the Fort, was 3,638 rods, or nearly twelve miles. The land designed for agriculture extended from the north fork of City Creek—which at that time ran through the Temple Block and through what is now known as the 17th and 16th Wards—to one mile south of Mill Creek; on the east it was bounded by the bench and on the west by the east line of the Fort. In this space there were 5,133 acres

taken for tilling. At the beginning of March 872 acres were sown with winter wheat, much of which was up and looking thrifty at that time. The balance of the land, about 4,260 acres, was designed for spring and summer crops. The plows were kept busily running every month through the winter, the weather being so mild during at least a portion of each month, that the land could be broken up. This was a great advantage to the people in putting in crops. In March, 1848, the population of the city was reported at 1,671 and the number of houses 423.

A number of persons, among whom were O. P. Rockwell, E. K. Fuller and A. A. Lathrop, went to California in the month of November, 1847, from the Valley to procure wheat, cows, beeves, etc. In May the two last named returned. They brought two hundred head of cows, at \$6 per head, with which they started from California, but lost forty head that ran back to California from the Mohave. They were ninety days on the homeward trip. Bro. O. P. Rockwell returned to the Valley in company with Captain Davis and some members of the Battalion, early in July.

(Contd. from *L. D. S. M. Star* of March 24, 1874.)

A large amount of grain and other crops were put in for a people situated as those in the Valley were in the spring of 1848. The crops did remarkably well considering the land was newly broken, until about the latter part of June, when the black crickets fell upon them. They committed dreadful havoc in the wheat and corn and vines, and for a while it seemed as if they would not leave anything of the crops. Men, women and children turned out to fight them; but with all the help and energy they could muster, it seemed as if all their labors would be in vain. . . .

At the time when prospects began to appear most gloomy, and all human power seemed useless, the sea gulls came in flocks, visited the fields, pounced upon the crickets and devoured them. They killed and ate until they were filled, then vomited and ate again. On Sunday the fields were deserted by the people, who devoted the day to worship. This was a feast day for the gulls—they devoured without let or hindrance. On Monday morning, on visiting the fields, the people found on the edges of the water ditches, the place where the crickets were always the most numerous, pile after pile of dead crickets which had been eaten by the gulls, and then vomited when they were full. . . .

The wheat and corn and other crops were tolerably good, and all united in pronouncing the land the best they ever saw for wheat. On the 10th of August the people of the valley met in the bowery in the Fort to celebrate their harvest. It was a joyful time. A most excellent dinner, comprised of a great variety of

food, and all produced in the valley, was prepared and eaten. There were prayer and thanksgiving, the firing of cannon, music and dancing and loud shouts of Hosannah to God and the Lamb, in which all present joined in unison. Dancing was a recreation which had been indulged in to some extent during the preceding winter. As is the custom among the Saints at present, dances were opened and closed with prayer, and the people danced with a zest and vigor that plainly showed they were happy and thankful in the new circumstances in which they were placed.

Until the return of President Young to the valley people generally lived in the forts; no one had attempted to build on any of the city lots. Indeed, with the exception of those taken up by the pioneers, they had not been claimed. At a meeting held a few days after the arrival of President Young and Kimball in the valley, they were appointed to apportion the city lots to applicants. At that meeting leave was also granted to build on the lots that fall (1848); but a rule was adopted by vote that all buildings in the city be erected at least twenty feet from the sidewalk. At a subsequent meeting it was voted that a land record should be kept by a clerk, and that \$1.50 should be paid for each lot—one dollar to the surveyor, and fifty cents to the clerk for recording. President Young proposed building a council house by tithing labor; also the plan of casting lots for the farming land; he also suggested bringing the waters of Big Cottonwood creek on the east of the big field to this city by a canal, which would make one line of fence. . . .

After the lots were given out to the people, a united effort was made to fence the city. Instead of fencing each lot separately, each ward was fenced in one field, and each owner of a lot in a ward built his proportion of the fence. This made the work of fencing the lots comparatively easy, and it answered every purpose for several seasons. The streets were all kept open, but not at their present width. The owners of lots cultivated the streets in front of their premises, leaving no more than a sufficient space for travel. At the end of each street leading out of the ward, into the main thoroughfares which ran around each ward, there were bars, which every one who passed in or out with a team or on horseback was required to be careful in putting up. There was no monopoly of land allowed. No man was permitted to take up a city lot or farming land for purposes of speculation. The owners of city lots were required to build upon them, it being understood that they took them up for their individual use only. A rule was generally enforced that no unmarried man should have a lot unless he were one of the Pioneers; if he intended to marry and build, then he could have a lot; but not otherwise. As time passed on these rules were relaxed somewhat;